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THE
CONSTITUTION
OF THE
NEW-HAMPSHIRE
MISSIONARY SOCIETY:
WITH AN
ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC;
AND THE
LETTER OF CREDENCE AND INSTRUCTIONS
GIVEN TO MISSIONARIES.

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CONCORD:

PRINTED BY GEORGE HOUGH.

For the New-Hampshire Missionary Society.

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Nov....1818.

Constitution.

THE experience of ages has proved, that in order to accomplish any important object of public utility, men must combine their counsels and exertions. To promote the spiritual and eternal well being of mankind, the friends of Zion must act in concert. Their prayers, and means, and efforts, must be united. From a consideration of the deplorable condition of many millions of our fellow men, who are perishing through lack of knowledge of the way of salvation by Christ; from a sense of voluntary and solemn obligation to promote the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom in all possible proper ways; and from the pious example of many friends of Christ, both in Europe and America; a number of Ministers, and servants of Christ, were convened at Hopkinton, on Wednesday the 2d day of September, in the year of our Lord 1801, for the purpose of consulting upon the most suitable means to promote a cause so desirable as the enlargement of God's kingdom, and the salvation of perishing souls; and did form themselves into a Society, in order to unite their exertions to spread abroad the glad tidings of salvation among the heathen, and others in our frontier and infant settlements, who are destitute of Gospel privileges.

At the time and place above mentioned, they did agree to adopt the following Constitution:—

Article I. The Society shall be known by the name of the "NEW-HAMPSHIRE MISSIONARY SOCIETY;" the sole object of which, is the propagation of the Gospel among those who are destitute of its precious privileges.

Art. II. The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and nine Trustees, to be chosen annually, by ballot, exclusive of the President and Secretary, who shall be Trustees *ex officiis*.

Art. III. The duty of the President shall be, to regulate the meetings of the Society; and to act as the Moderator of the Board of Trustees, any six of whom shall constitute a quorum.

Art. IV. The duty of the Secretary, besides acting as a Trustee, shall be, to keep a Record of the transactions of the Society, and perform all the services which usually appertain to said office.

Art. V. The duty of the Treasurer shall be, to receive, and be accountable for, all the property of the Society, in whatever way it may arise; to answer the orders of the Trustees, and to exhibit a fair account of all his proceedings, to the Society, annually; and oftener to the Trustees, if required.

Art. VI. It shall be the duty of the Trustees, to examine candidates for missions; to employ and direct Missionaries; furnish them with proper credentials; recall or dismiss them, if necessary; and in a word, to superintend the affairs of the Society, between their annual meetings; when it will be expected that they make report of their proceedings, and also of the services and success of their Missionaries.

Art. VII. That the Society may reap the benefit of the united exertions of their Board of Trustees, it shall be the duty of said Board to hold, stately, semi-annual meetings; and to meet oftener, if it should be necessary.

VIII. The Society shall meet annually, on the Thursday next after the 3d Tuesday of September, at 9 o'clock A. M.; unless for special reasons they shall agree at one meeting to have their next holden at a different time. On the day of their annual meeting, a Sermon shall be delivered at 3 o'clock, P. M. And at each meeting the Preacher, a first and second, shall be chosen; and also the place shall be appointed for the next meeting.

IX. All questions before the Society, shall be determined by a majority of the members present, excepting amendments of the Constitution: these shall require the concurrence of two thirds of the members present, and shall be proposed one year beforehand for consideration.

X. Any person may become a member of the Society, by subscribing the Constitution, and advancing two Dollars for the promotion of the object of the Society; which sum shall be advanced at every annual meeting: and every person thus united shall be considered as retaining his membership, unless he shall present to the Secretary a written request to withdraw; in which case, the Secretary shall enter his name on the Records as dismissed.

XI. Every settled Minister belonging to the Society, and other suitable persons, shall have a copy of the Constitution for the purpose of admitting members, and shall take pains to afford opportunity to all who may be

disposed to become members, who shall subscribe the Constitution, advance their entrance money to him, and shall receive his receipt for the same; which they shall convey to the Treasurer, to whom the money is to be conveyed as soon as convenient; and the names of all thus uniting, shall be transmitted by the Minister, or person who receives them, to the Secretary, for enrolment.

XII. It is recommended, that every settled Minister in the Society lead his people, at least once in a year, to the consideration of the duty of contributing for the propagation of the Gospel, and to afford them opportunity for doing the same by appointing some Sabbath or season for the purpose; or he shall assign a reason for his neglect. And the Deacons of his Church are desired by the Society to deliver to him the avails of such contributions, to take his receipt for the same, & to transmit the receipt to the Treasurer, to whom the money shall be sent; and the Minister or person shall also transmit a statement of the sum thus received, to the Secretary, to be recorded.

XIII. When any one shall be disposed to make donations to the Society, for the propagation of the Gospel, he shall receive a receipt for the same from the Treasurer, President, or one of the Trustees, to whom the donation may be committed: and the donor is requested to transmit said receipt to the Secretary, who shall keep Records of all such donations, and shall present such receipts to the Society at their annual meeting: and if any one should wish to make private donations, his name in the receipt may be concealed, provided the person by whom they are conveyed be recognized therein.

XIV. It will be expected, that the Trustees use great precaution in the appointment of Missionaries; that none be employed but persons of good report, of known prudence and integrity, as well as of good abilities and information, and who, in a judgment of charity, are subjects of regenerating grace, and possess true zeal and fortitude in the cause of our Lord.

Address to the Public.

After twelve years experience, the New-Hampshire Missionary Society may with confidence appeal to the community touching the utility of their Institution. It

is believed, that the prayers and exertions, and the liberality of its friends, have not been in vain; but that the blessing of some who were ready to perish have come upon them. So incalculably great is the worth of souls, and so great is the price which has been paid to provide their ransom, that if only one sinner has been brought to repentance, and saved from eternal reprobation, by the instrumentality of this Society, that would be an abundant reward for the combined labors and sacrifices of all its members and friends. But it is believed, that many souls have been savingly benefited by these exertions. In instances where some assistance has been afforded to small and destitute settlements, it has excited among them a zeal to exert themselves to support Gospel institutions. In this respect the charitable aids of the Society have had a tendency not only to keep alive a sense of the importance of the Gospel among the new settlements, but have furnished inducements to them to help themselves.

Experience has furnished ground for the hope that God does own this Institution; that its object coincides with his designs of mercy respecting Zion; and that he takes its efforts under his peculiar direction.

The Society, in presenting this revised copy of its Constitution to the community, would put in its claim to public patronage, not only on account of the immense importance of the object which it proposes, but from a consideration that it is the first Institution of the kind, and perhaps the first Association for purely charitable purposes, which was ever in our State. It constitutes a new era in the history of New-Hampshire---an era of public charity; and, as the first effort of the kind, it has an indubitable claim on the liberal aid of all who wish for the order, stability, and well being of society, as well as of those who desire the prosperity and enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Although, in some respects, the spirit of the age is alarming, and the prospect is distressing, yet in other respects we may consider it a privilege that we live in such an age, because it furnishes an opportunity and a motive for all to do something for the precious cause of Jesus. It opens channels for the smallest contributions for the propagation of the Gospel. Never were the necessities of the destitute more urgent; never was the adversary more busily employed in projecting schemes to counteract the Gospel; never were religious institutions

more boldly assailed by a spirit of infidelity; and never before had we such examples of exertion for the extensive diffusion of Gospel knowledge. Shall we remain indifferent and inactive, and do nothing to prevent the triumphs of the grand adversary? Shall we have no participation in the final triumph of truth and holiness over error and sin? Do we not reproach ourselves that we so long neglected this great undertaking? How can we answer it to our consciences? How shall we answer it at the bar of our Judge, should we continue to neglect this deeply interesting duty? Are you not ready, and have you not encouragement still, to continue your aid to the Missionary Society? How pleasing the consideration, that your liberality may be an occasion of the conversion and salvation of many precious and immortal souls; and that the happy effects of it may be realized by generations yet unborn!

Should you contribute a small portion of that worldly substance which the great Author of the Gospel has kindly committed to your care, it will be considered as lent to the Lord: and he who is able to make all grace abound toward you, will see that you are not impoverished by the sacrifices which you make in his cause. You have his promise, that you shall not ultimately suffer loss by what you do for him. "The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

The Missionary Society again solicit your pious and charitable co-operation. Can you refuse your attention, your influence, your prayers, or a share of your worldly substance, for the promotion of an object so vastly important, and so deeply interesting?

May the God of all grace inspire all our hearts with wisdom and zeal to seek his glory and the prosperity of Zion, and prepare us to join the general assembly and church of the First-born in Heaven.

Letter of Credence and Instructions given to Missionaries.

To Missionary
of the New-Hampshire Missionary Society.

REVEREND SIR,

THIS certifies, that you are appointed, by the New-Hampshire Missionary Society, to perform Missionary services for the term of months.

The Society place confidence in you, that you will, during your Mission, attend to the following INSTRUCTIONS, given to all their Missionaries :--

I. You will devote the term of your Mission to the sole purpose of inculcating the principles of genuine Christianity, both publicly and privately, upon the objects of your Mission.

II. You will spend your time, as much as possible, in those places which are most destitute, and which possess the least means of providing religious instruction for themselves.

III. You will accept of no reward from those to whom you minister, excepting your daily bread; unless donations to the Society, for which you will be accountable.

IV. You will not, during your Mission, purchase lands, or engage in any secular business whatever.

V. It is expected, that you will not enter into the political disputes of our country, as tending to prejudice the mind, and to defeat the great object of your Mission.

VI. You will keep a daily Journal of your proceedings, while in the Society's service; and a particular account of the manner in which you distribute books committed to your care.

VII. You will note particularly, in your Journal, special incidents that may occur within the circuit of your labors, during your mission, which may be interesting and instructive relative to religion.

VIII. You will make all due exertions to induce the people, in the towns where you labor, who are destitute of regular preaching, to set up and constantly maintain the public worship of God, on Lord's days.

IX. You will endeavor to promote, so far as may be in your power, the object adopted by the General Associations and others, of laboring to dissuade people from the undue use of ardent spirits.

The Society wish you the presence of God, and his blessing upon your labors: And in their name, we subscribe ourselves,

Your Brethren in the faith and fellowship
of the Gospel.

*President.
Secretary.*